

INVESTIGATION OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE U. S. S.
MAINE.

JUNE 4, 1898.—Ordered to be printed.

MR. CHANDLER, from the Committee on Naval Affairs, submitted the
following

REPORT.

[To accompany Senate Res. No. 285.]

The Committee on Naval Affairs, which was directed to investigate the destruction of the U. S. S. *Maine* in Havana Harbor on February 15, 1898, by a resolution of the Senate adopted on February 21, which was as follows:

Resolved, That the Committee on Naval Affairs be, and they are hereby, directed to make thorough inquiry into the cause of the destruction of the battle ship *Maine* in Habana Harbor on the fifteenth instant, and to report the result of the same to the Senate;

make report as follows:

That shortly after the passage of the resolution a subcommittee of the Committee on Naval Affairs was appointed, which entered into conferences with the Secretary of the Navy. The naval court of inquiry, consisting of Capt. William T. Sampson, president; Capt. French E. Chadwick, and Lieut. Commander William P. Potter, additional members, with Lieut. Commander Adolph Marix as judge-advocate, which began its inquiry in the harbor of Havana on the U. S. S. *Mangrove* on February 21, 1898, was then in session, and its report was expected soon to be presented to the Department. This court went on to take all the testimony which was obtainable under the circumstances of the inquiry, and made a careful investigation of the facts connected with the destruction of the *Maine* and of the supposed causes of that destruction. On the 28th day of March, 1898, the President transmitted to the Senate the report of the court of inquiry, together with the testimony, and the communication was on that day by the Senate referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

The Committee on Foreign Relations, thus being by direction of the Senate in possession of the report, instituted further inquiries into the cause of the destruction of the *Maine*, and examined witnesses in addition to those who had testified before the court of inquiry. On April 13, 1898, the committee made a report to the Senate relative to affairs

in Cuba (Senate Report No. 885, Fifty-fifth Congress, second session), which report, from Page IV to VII, deals with the destruction of the *Maine*, and reaches two conclusions, as follows:

It is established that the *Maine* was destroyed by the explosion of a submarine mine, in position under her in a Spanish harbor, at a place where she had been moored to a buoy by the express direction and guidance of the Spanish authorities.

That the destruction of the *Maine* was compassed either by the official act of the Spanish authorities (and the ascertainment of the particular person is not material) or was made possible by a negligence on their part so willing and gross as to be equivalent in culpability to positive criminal action.

The testimony taken by the Committee on Foreign Relations accompanies and is printed with its report.

In view of all the foregoing facts, the Committee on Naval Affairs have, up to this time, deemed it not expedient to make a separate and additional inquiry beyond that made by the Navy Department and the Committee on Foreign Relations, and do not now deem such an inquiry necessary for the public interest, and therefore ask that the committee may be discharged from the further consideration of the subject.